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RECENT PSYCHOLOGY
AND
EVANGELISTIC PREACHING

**THE RECENT PSYCHOLOGY
OF THE CHURCH AND ITS
EVANGELISTIC PREACHING**

BY

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TO MY WIFE

P R E F A C E

The substance of this little book formed a paper read some months ago before a number of Ministers. It has been elaborated and presented in its present form at the request of those who heard it.

The chief concern of the writer has been to set forth some of the leading factors in Evangelism in the light of modern psychology, and so emphasize the difference between a true and false evangelism. The treatment here attempted of such a large and important subject is hopelessly inadequate. But it may prove helpful to those who have not the opportunity of exploring the subject in all its bearings.

The Author gladly takes the opportunity of acknowledging his sense of indebtedness to Rev. J. C. Robertson, M.A., B.D., who has been for many years his counsellor and friend, for his kindness in reading the proofs.

W. L. NORTHRIDGE.

Belfast,

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INTRODUCTION

At present no science is more popular than that of psychology, and its principles are being applied in numerous directions. The myths of the past are explained on the same principle as the dreams of the individual. They represent the fulfilment of wishes common to a group of people, as dreams do the wishes of the individual. Similarly problems of education, sociology, and character formation are all seen in a new light because of recent developments in psychology. But it is especially in connexion with the study of mental derangement—neuroses, obsessions, hysteria of various kinds—that psychology has been most useful. It is here that we come upon those psychological principles that are, not only the most recent, but also the most helpful from the point of view of religion.

Our intention in the following pages is not to discuss the 'new psychology' and religion in general. Several authors have of late more or less successfully undertaken this task. They have dealt with the subject of sin, conversion, prayer, faith, &c., and have brought the principles of psychology to bear on these aspects of religious experience. Our aim is much more circumscribed. It is not so much with the analysis and description of religious experiences in general that we are concerned, as with *the method by which certain forms of religious experience are brought about.*

At the present time the Church in many places is rejoicing in a revival of religion. There have been conversions on a large scale, and the masses are more easily reached and influenced for good than has been the case for very many years. The question as to how conversion takes place from a psychological point of view is, therefore, timely. Not only so, but we are now better able to answer that question with the light that recent psychology has given us than was possible during any previous revival of religion. Many factors operate in bringing about conversion, as the following pages will indicate, but our main task is to discuss the method generally employed to achieve this type of spiritual experiences, viz. evangelistic preaching.

First, however, it will be necessary to define our terms more fully. What, it may be asked, is meant by evangelistic preaching, and what are the main principles of recent psychology? Evangelistic preaching has both a distinctive doctrinal basis and a distinctive aim. Its basis is evangelical truth. It assumes the reality of sin, the need for and universality of atonement, and the Saviourhood of Christ. It is the Cross, with all that this implies as regards both God and Man, that is the central and vital theme of the evangelist. Moreover, evangelistic preaching has a distinctive aim. It is concerned not with the task of imparting instruction on social, moral, or theological problems, but rather with the salvation of men. This is its primary aim. It is obvious that a preacher may be evangelical without being evangelistic. He may pin his faith to evangelical doctrine, and may brilliantly

expound it, without either aiming directly at conversion or winning men for Christ. But the converse is not possible. A preacher cannot be evangelistic without being at the same time evangelical. His appeal for men's salvation is based on the assumption that men both need and can experience salvation ; it is based, that is, on evangelical doctrine.

Before we ask what recent psychology has to say with regard to both the value of evangelistic preaching as thus defined, and the factors that help us to understand its effectiveness, we have still the other terms of our subject to explain. To this the first chapter will be devoted.

CHAPTER I

MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY

It has been suggested in the Introduction that the aspects of psychology that are most illuminating from the religious standpoint are those that have developed in connexion with the study of mental disease. Psychology itself has in recent years made very rapid advances, and is now divided off into different sections. These include experimental psychology, evolution and mental development, child psychology, social psychology, and medical psychology. This last branch of the science has important relations with our subject and must be briefly explained. Generally speaking there are two schools of medical psychologists. These may be distinguished according to the method which each advocates in the attempt to bring healing to the mental sufferer. In the one case suggestion in various forms is the method employed, in the other 'free-association' is adopted.

Suggestion has been practised as a psycho-therapeutic agency for many years. Coué, its most distinguished present-day advocate, tells us that it is as old as the birth of man, but its value has only been recently recognized. As a method of healing deliberately practised it had its beginnings in the work of Charcot, Liebault, Bernheim, and others. These physicians used it in conjunction with hypnotic experiments only. In this form, suggestion continues

to be practised by an increasing number of physicians, not only on the Continent, but in America, and in this country. The birth of the new Nancy School, however, has brought what may be called pure suggestion more fully into prominence. Hypnotism, except perhaps in a very light form, has been definitely discarded, and the main thesis upon which the new school proceeds is that ideas, unless opposed by contradictory ideas, tend to realize themselves.

In accordance with this belief, Coué developed the conviction that all successful suggestion is of the nature of auto-suggestion. Unless the suggestion of the physician or other operator is accepted by the sub-conscious of the patient, it has no power to fulfil itself. Coué always tells his patients that he cannot cure them, but that each man possesses the power to cure himself. All he needs to do is to receive and make his own the suggestions which he receives from his physician to ensure the restoration of health. Coué's doctrine has helped to remove some of the strongest objections to the practice of suggestion in its earlier forms. The adoption of this therapeutic agency was strongly opposed on the ground that it was degrading to personality that the patient should be dominated by the will of another. This was what happened in mesmerism and hypnotism—the patient's will was entirely controlled by the personality of the experimenter. This was obviated by the Coué method, in which the patient is not regarded as the passive recipient of the suggestions of others, but is called upon to exercise his own powers for purposes of healing, and assert his own individuality. In this way the

primacy of the will and the independence of the individual are safeguarded.

The second school—known as the psycho-analytic—has dispensed altogether with suggestion as a healing agency, and has substituted for it the method of ‘free-association.’ Let us briefly explain what this method means. The root of mental disease is recognized as some unconscious attitude based on an emotional experience or experiences that have occurred in early days. These experiences have either never been conscious or have since become unconscious. It is not necessary to enter fully into the important questions arising out of this. But in brief psycho-analysts believe that the abuse of some of the fundamental instincts—especially that of sex—lies at the root of the great majority of cases of mental trouble. Elsewhere I have attempted such criticisms of this theory as seem necessary.¹ Here it should be said in fairness to the authors of psycho-analysis that the term sexual is used by them in a very broad and general sense. Freud identifies it with the word ‘eros’ as used by Plato, or the German Liebe, which means love in the most general sense; and he advises any one who considers sex as something mortifying and humiliating to human nature to make use of the more genteel expressions of ‘eros and ‘erotic.’²

The underlying principle of psycho-analysis is that we keep thrusting from consciousness all painful thoughts and feelings and such experiences as are connected with them. Now the thoughts and feelings that are particularly painful—painful, that is, in the

¹ *Modern Theories of the Unconscious*, Chap. IV.

² *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, p. 39.

moral sense—are such as are connected with the sex instincts. It is difficult to get a group of people to talk frankly about sexual problems. Thoughts connected with these somehow seem to clash with high moral sensitivity, and the result is their repression. We repress them not only in the sense of refraining from giving expression to them in the presence of others, but we repress them from our own consciousness as well; we hide them from ourselves. It is these repressed or painful thoughts that form the unconscious, and it is important to know that they do not remain in the unconscious in any passive or quiescent form, but are ever active and constantly seeking to obtrude themselves into consciousness. The barriers against such expression of unconscious thoughts and wishes are precisely those forces that in the first instance drove them into the unconscious, viz., those social, moral, or religious standards that come to be set up in the developed consciousness.

Here we come upon the source of much mental trouble and the secret of nervous collapse. The repressed tendencies or emotions that are denied natural expression are always knocking at the door of consciousness, and the only way in which they can get through is by assuming some disguised form. The energy of repressed instincts can, according to this theory, be taken up, e.g., to re-enforce the higher moral, aesthetic, or religious activities, and if for any reason this becomes impossible an outlet is forced that may be morally or mentally unhelpful or even destructive.

These are the broad principles on which the psycho-

analytic theory of mental disease is based. What is the psycho-analytic method of *cure*? It consists in the bringing to consciousness of the repressed or unconscious material. This is achieved by the use of "free association." The patient is asked to remove all restraint and speak out freely and without effort all that comes into his mind, no matter how trivial or absurd the ideas which he expresses may be. From a careful analysis of these ideas the skilled analyst can track down many a forgotten experience to its lair in the unconscious; and once the repressed thoughts or experiences are brought into the light of consciousness they lose their power, and relief is experienced by the patient.

Perhaps there is no better illustration of the psycho-analytic method than the case of claustrophobia investigated by Dr. Rivers, and described in his book *Instinct and the Unconscious*. Dr. Rivers, of course, is not a strict Freudian, but he has adopted and used with much success the psycho-analytic method. In his work at the Front during the War, amongst other cases that came to his notice was that of a young man who was suffering from claustrophobia. Every time he entered the trenches, or any enclosed place, he broke down nervously. Dr. Rivers attempted to get at the root of his trouble by the method of psycho-analysis. The man's dreams were carefully analysed, and by the aid of free association, the memory was stimulated so that bit by bit of the patient's forgotten past was recalled to consciousness. Finally the records of an emotional shock that took place at a very early age were disinterred. The boy was walking

alone through a dark tunnel when he was suddenly confronted by a dog. He became at once terror-stricken and experienced his first nervous collapse. The remnants of this shock appeared in his dreams, and the truth of the experience was substantiated by his parents. When the shock was recalled to consciousness the patient began to make rapid improvement, and the fear of enclosed places departed.

This story illustrates simply the psycho-analytic procedure, which recognizes most cases of mental breakdown as due to emotional experiences that occur in early days and have remained buried in the unconscious throughout the years. They are difficult to unearth because of their incompatibility with conscious standards. This is obvious if the particular experience is associated with the sexual instincts; but other instincts, such as that which arouses fear, are also painful to consciousness. On the battlefield, for example, a soldier has to repress all feelings of fear, for such feelings clash with military requirements and standards. Now the motive that explains the expulsion of an experience from consciousness accounts also for the difficulty of its resuscitation. Such experiences are kept in the unconscious because they are distasteful to consciousness. For this reason the strongest resistance is offered if any attempt is made to revive them. The patient will endeavour, unwittingly of course, to get the physician side-tracked if he is on the road to the root of the trouble, or will get angry, and refuse to allow further treatment to take place. Not until this resistance is overcome is a cure likely to be effected.

CHAPTER II

EMOTION, INTELLECT, AND WILL IN RELIGIOUS
EXPERIENCE.

From the brief account just given of recent developments in psychology it will be obvious to begin with that considerable importance is attached to the feeling element of the mental life. This is especially notable in the psycho-analytic theory, in which the root of mental disease is sought for in emotional experiences. Strictly speaking, it is impossible to separate thought, feeling, and conation, for in every mental experience all three in some proportion may be discovered. It is possible, however, to lay the emphasis on one or another of the elements, and so to build up a system of psychology which recognizes the primacy either of the will, or of the reason, or of feeling.

Freudians, though they do not explicitly say so, support the theory of the primacy of feeling. Emotion is regarded by them as the root of mental trouble; it is the emotional element in any experience that is all-important, it is the emotional tone of any mental complex that keeps it buried in the unconscious; and if relief is to come to the mentally deranged the experience which is the pathogenic factor must not only be recalled but re-experienced, not only known but re-lived in all its original emotional intensity. In emphasizing the power of feeling in the mental life social psychologists are in thorough agreement with psycho-analysts, and both schools approximate to the position of Hobbes, who declared reason to be

'the slave of the passions.' Probably this point of view is too extreme, but much of the psychology of the eighteenth and nineteenth century went to the other extreme in the tendency to ignore feeling altogether, and deal only with ideas or the processes of reason and will. If feeling finds a respectable and important place in present-day psychology it is due largely, if not altogether, to the work of social psychologists. These writers undertook to classify and analyse the instinctive forces of life, and in so doing, they assigned to each instinctive activity its peculiar emotional tone.¹

General psychology is fully sharing in this modern tendency to bring the feeling element of the mental life into prominence. While the independence of thought and conation are recognized, yet feeling, so far from being ignored, receives equal treatment with these, and is regarded as the driving force of life and the basis of character.

This point is of considerable importance in the present connexion. For in evangelistic preaching the appeal is especially directed to the emotional side of the mind. This is obvious when we consider the evangelist's theme. In the preaching of the Cross, whatever be our doctrine of it—whether we view it from the standpoint of man with a consequent call to repentance on his part, or from the standpoint of God as expressing His undying love for men—the appeal is primarily to the emotions. Under such preaching men are made to feel—often

¹ For a full account of the place of instinct and feeling in the mental life, readers may be referred to McDougall's *Social Psychology* or Shand's *The Foundations of Character*.

to feel so keenly as to weep for their sins—rather than to think. Thus in the accounts available of the eighteenth-century revival, or any other revival, penitents are generally described as passing through the most agonizing experiences before the peace of assurance is reached. In view of this, the insistence which modern psycho-therapy lays on the re-living of old experiences in their emotional intensity is very suggestive. Relief does not come to a patient by the mere recall of forgotten experiences. Affect¹ of high intensity must accompany the cognitive processes of recall if these are to be of any value. The same principle underlies evangelistic preaching, with its emphasis on the need for genuine penitence as an adequate preparation for the reception of the new life. To this extent evangelism finds striking support in modern psychology. Hitherto criticized because of its emotionalism, evangelistic preaching is not only justified, but has considerable light thrown on its effectiveness from this source. If change of life or development of character are the results aimed at in evangelistic preaching—and there is no other that will make preaching worth while—then the emotional element of the life, the foundations of character, cannot be ignored. How, it may be asked, can the life be changed or character be formed if the driving forces of life are not appealed to?

Here, however, is to be found not only the strength of evangelistic preaching, but its weakness as well.

¹ 'Affect' is another name for emotion. Freud uses it generally to denote emotion that is sexually toned.

For while the evangelistic appeal is intensely emotional it ought not to be exclusively so. Intellect and will have their own part to play as well as feeling in the birth of the new life—otherwise the new life, while it may be different from the old, may not be a real improvement. There are two ways in which the intellect ought to be involved in evangelistic preaching. First, the appeal should be made not to the emotions directly, but rather to these through the intellect. The type of evangelism that plays on the feelings of an audience is but second-rate and often injurious. Far superior to this is the preaching that involves the exercise of the intellect rather than its suppression. Decision to be worth while must be made intelligently. For this purpose the evangelist himself ought to possess a certain amount of mental equipment. Nothing in the end can be more injurious to the cause of true evangelism than to leave out of account all questions of culture and training. Spiritual experience is, of course, the first essential ; but it is not the exclusive one in the most successful type of evangelistic preaching. There ought to be no incompatibility between culture and evangelism. The irreducible minimum necessary for the best type of evangelistic preaching is a clear knowledge of fundamental evangelical truth, and the power to present it in a convincing manner. Let the evangelistic appeal be based on a clear presentation of evangelical truth, and the most desirable results will follow. Further—and this is the second reason why the intellect ought not to be ignored in evangelistic preaching—the Christian life involves a change of thought as well as a change of feeling. Christian

decision has meant, for some, the awakening of latent mental powers, and the creation of a desire for knowledge as well as the birth of new feelings. For others decision leads to a change of thought about many things, and to the establishment of intellectual interests and pursuits.

Recent psychology—especially that phase of it represented by C. G. Jung—distinguishes between the introverted and the extroverted type of mind. In the former thought predominates over feeling, in the latter feeling over thought. A general distinction of this kind, I think, is true to fact. There are some individuals who seem incapable of intense feeling—or at any rate who do not feel so deeply as others. Psychology, in describing mental types of this kind, does not hesitate to use such terms as ‘de-emotionalized’ and ‘de-emotionalization,’ as if through some strange process the feeling side of the life had become dried up. It is obvious that if types of this kind are to be influenced by evangelistic preaching, then the intellect must be strongly appealed to. Mere pulpit emotionalism will call forth no response from the introverted type of character, while it may move the extroverted. True evangelism must take into account the psychological differences that exist between individuals, and recognize that the line of appeal that will win one man will not influence another. The intellect, that is, as well as the emotions, must be taken into account in successful evangelism.

The place of the will in spiritual experience must be considered. We are dealing, of course, only with that initial experience called ‘conversion,’ and it is

obvious that the will plays a very important part in this process. Whether the evangelistic appeal is made primarily to the emotions or to the intellect, it must be finally directed to the will. Unless response in the sense of personal decision and commitment to a new life of service follows, evangelistic preaching will lead only to a spiritual hedonism—the creation of a set of pleasant feelings, in the enjoyment of which the individual may become selfishly absorbed. Now the form which the evangelistic appeal often takes may seem to indicate the reverse. For it is not the exercise of the will, but rather its surrender, that is asked for, as the condition of salvation. No point is made clearer to an anxious inquirer than the need on his part of the yielding up of the will to Christ. Modern psychology in this respect is entirely with the evangelist. Coué insists on the power of imagination rather than on that of will in the production of healing. Mere effort of will, instead of helping the promotion of health, has the opposite effect. ‘Let us consider the case of a person suffering from insomnia. If he does not make any effort to sleep, he will lie quietly in bed. If on the contrary he tries to force himself to sleep by his *will*, the more efforts he makes the more restless he becomes.’¹ Here is expressed the central principle of Coué’s method. The imagination which, instead of the will, is the agent in promoting health, is simply the power we possess of picturing ourselves free from all disease and in the enjoyment of perfect health. The same principle Coué advocates in dealing

¹ *Self-mastery through Conscious Auto-suggestion*, p. 12.

with morals. Any one, he says, can rid himself of moral defects through the influence of imagination, whereas to attempt the task by mere will force usually only tightens the grip that vice has on him.

The method which is followed by the evangelist is on precisely the same lines. He knows that no man can attain salvation by any desperate effort of his own, that the more man strives to find forgiveness the more miserable and desperate his state becomes. Therefore, he advises the anxious inquirer to stop the struggle, and simply surrender his will, or abandon himself to Christ, and the peace of spiritual assurance becomes his immediate possession.

Where, then, it may be asked, does the will come in? Is it not an indispensable requirement for the attainment of spiritual experience that its operations be completely suspended? and if this be so, does it not seem strange that spiritual experience can only come through the suppression of an important element of our individuality?

We may be helped to clear our minds on this point by considering the difference, made so much of by Coué and his school, between auto-suggestion and hetero-suggestion. Already we have pointed out that the weakness of the older forms in which suggestion was practised was its degrading influence on the patient. In the first place, the patient had to submit to hypnotism, for it was thought that suggestion would be non-effective unless it was administered to the subject in a state of sleep. Further, the will of the physician was always the overmastering factor in the case, his personality completely dominated the patient;

who for the time being became a slave to the will and suggestions of the experimenter. The advantage of Coué's method is that it encourages the patient to personal exertion in the interests of health, and to acceptance of such suggestions only from the physician as he can feel free to carry out himself. Coué, that is, emphasizes auto-suggestion as the curative agency. Every hetero-suggestion, if it is to be successful, must be changed into an auto-suggestion.

This consideration helps us to understand that while in one sense the will must be set aside if conversion is to be experienced, in another sense conversion depends on an act of will. Obviously the surrender of one's own will must be deliberate, and so must be the acceptance of the Divine will. In this double way our wills are definitely involved in spiritual experience. The demands of the Christian life or the will of Christ are not imposed upon us.—we must accept them and make them our own.

Our wills are ours we know not how,
Our wills are ours to make them Thine.

It is here we come upon a principal distinction between good and bad evangelism. Often, especially in revival services, a profession of spiritual change is made in which the will can scarcely be said to operate. In such gatherings an atmosphere is created that makes suggestion a real weapon in the hands of the evangelist. Men often find their way into the inquiry-room without real conviction. They find themselves there and cannot say why, but the psychologist has his theory of the matter. He attributes much of the work done in revival services to herd suggestions. Some are seen moving towards the

inquiry-room or the penitent-forms, with the result that others feel a strong compulsion to follow. Every evangelist understands this in practice, for he knows the importance of 'getting the ice broken.' If only he can get one man to move, then he has his opportunity to plead for others, and this is often responded to by a general giving way or breaking down.

It is a mistake in these circumstances to begin to tabulate results, for when the atmosphere changes and the influence of suggestion ceases to operate, many of the so-called 'converts' relapse to the old levels of life. The reason is that the whole personality has not been in it. Coué claims that the results that follow his method of auto-suggestion are much more permanent than those attributed to suggestion in its earlier forms. One can easily believe this, for if a patient makes an idea his own it remains his own and continues to operate in all his future life, whereas suggestions made during hypnosis, that in the circumstances could not have been deliberately accepted by the patient soon lose their influence, and the experiment has to be repeated.

So it is with those whose 'conversion' has been brought about under force of threats or undue pleading, or merely under the influence of suggestion. Such 'conversions' are short lived, for there has been no deliberate and intelligent acceptance of the Christian life. It is the will of the preacher rather than that of the hearer that has been the deciding factor, and once this is removed the old life inevitably re-asserts itself. That much of the work done in revival services is the result of a light form of hypnosis is clear to all who are

versed in the principles of modern psychology. The audience is got into a good mood by witty remarks and humour, and once the right atmosphere is created the mind is receptive to all types of suggestion. A certain rapport between evangelist and people is necessary if the message is to be received, and what better method can be employed for this purpose than the use of humour? The evangelist who has this gift and can use it is in possession of a mighty instrument, but every preacher should understand its dangers. It helps to create a receptive mood, but something more than mere empty appeal should follow. There should be sound teaching both on doctrine and practice, and on the basis of this the appeal for decision should be made. The best kind of evangelistic preaching is that in which with conviction and clearness the great evangelical truths of religion are set forth. Decisions that follow such preaching are nothing less than the response of the whole personality, including thought, feeling and will, to the gospel appeal.

CHAPTER III

THE UNCONSCIOUS AND EVANGELISTIC PREACHING

In recent psychology the conception of the unconscious occupies a central place. The unconscious itself as a principle is nothing new ; in the philosophy of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it was very widely applied. And no one stated it more

clearly than Leibniz, who was the first to introduce it seriously. For him 'the present was big with the past and laden with the future.' The past, that is, does not vanish when it is forgotten; it influences the present; while the present, to a large extent, determines the future. It is surprising the extent to which Leibniz and other writers of the eighteenth century anticipated the principles of modern psychology. Thus the distinction that Freud makes between the pre-conscious and the unconscious may be traced, though not explicitly, in these writers. The pre-conscious contains those forgotten ideas and experiences that may at any time be recalled to consciousness without the aid of any special method. The unconscious proper contains only such experiences as are repugnant to consciousness and so are kept in a state of repression of some kind.

Pre-Freudian psychology considered seriously only the unconscious in the first sense, viz. the pre-conscious, and this was the only conception available for those who undertook to work out a psychology of religion. Thus if we consider Professor William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*, it will be found that his account of conversion is based on this conception of the unconscious. The unconscious is simply the store-house of ideas, and religious conversion is due to the maturing of ideas that have lodged there as the result of religious teaching. 'I explain,' he says, 'the phenomena as partly due to explicitly conscious processes of thought and will, but as due largely also to the subconscious incubation and maturing of motives deposited by the experiences

of life. When ripe, the results hatch out, or burst into flower' (p. 230). This account of conversion is true so far as it goes, and it may be worth while to emphasize here one point of importance.

In the preceding chapter, reference was made to the need for clear teaching as well as emotional intensity if evangelistic preaching was to be successful. But the teaching contained in the single address after which the evangelistic appeal is made is not enough. Biblical and religious training extending over a lifetime are necessary for the best results. Freud points out that the ideas that wield the greatest influence over the life are those imparted to us in our childhood days. No one can attribute conversion to the influence of the evangelist or evangelistic appeal through which it is actually brought about. Strictly speaking, there is rarely such a thing as sudden conversion. The difference between the old life and the new may be outwardly of the most radical kind, and the cleavage between them may take place with startling suddenness. But this is only superficial. In the unconscious the maturing of religious ideas has gone on perhaps over a wide period of life, and conversion must be conceived of as the end-product of a long subconscious process. It is well, therefore, to link up the work of Sunday-school teaching, the religious training of home, and the various other sources from which spiritual influence plays upon the mind, with the evangelistic appeal, which generally ought to be regarded as the occasion and not the cause of conversion.

The question, however, presents itself, how do subconscious ideas mature so as to lead to the ex-

perience—often cataclysmic—called conversion? Ideas as such are static. It is questionable whether they possess the inherent power attributed to them by Professor James, and also by Coué, of realizing themselves. The psychology that emphasizes a more dynamic view of the unconscious is on sounder lines. According to it, ideas lodged in the pre-conscious live and become active by becoming invested with repressed emotion. Here we touch upon the Freudian doctrine of *sublimation*. This word in the psychology of Freud indicates that process by which the emotion or energy that is denied natural expression, and becomes repressed, is taken up in other activities and utilized in ways that are quite acceptable to the social, moral, or religious consciousness. Freud regards all the higher mental functions—those involved, e.g. in literary and artistic creation, and in religious experience—as the expression of sublimated energy. This means that religion is based upon the sex instincts, and is in itself a disguised method of their expression. What happens in conversion is that the flow of sexual energy that is denied natural expression forces for itself another outlet in religious activity, and becomes occupied with those ideas of God that it finds, as the result of religious training, ready to hand in the pre-conscious. This view of the origin and nature of religion would, if it were quite true, be sufficient to discredit religion altogether in the minds of many. When, however, all the facts are looked at without prejudice, even if this interpretation of religion be correct, it is not so serious as at first it appears.

It is only when we take the term sex in its most narrow and crude sense that we need seriously object to this type of approach to religious experience. Some psychologists have made the attempt to attribute all our religious experiences to the development of the sexual instincts in this sense. They are doubtless influenced considerably by the fact that conversions most commonly occur about the time of adolescence. But the contention that religion is only a form of the sexual life could only be seriously defended if all conversions took place at this period. This, of course, is not true. There are those who have very vivid religious experiences before the time of adolescence when the sexual instincts proper are not as yet organized. There are others again who experience the crisis of conversion in old age when the sexual instincts are dead. It is impossible to account for these cases if all religious experience is dependent alone on sublimated sexual emotion. At the most, therefore, we can only admit that religion partakes in part of sexual energy, but that there are other elements as well that are independent of this.

Even if we accept the view that religion has its roots in the sexual instincts, then the analogy leaves some room for non-sexual factors. For no plant depends on the soil alone for its development. The sun and rain and the general atmospheric properties are just as essential as the soil. Moreover, the plant itself in the first instance springs, not from the soil, but from the principle of life inherent in the bulb or seed. We have to begin with this, otherwise the soil will be of no account. So even if it be admitted that

the sexual nature is the soil in which religion has its roots, yet the principle or faculty of religion must be conceived of as existing in its own right. Once this is admitted, why should it be considered degrading that our religious faculties should be re-inforced with energy drawn from the sexual instincts? After all, these instincts in themselves, like every other instinct of life, are neither good nor evil. Everything depends on how they are used. What can be conceived of as more helpful to the life than that energy, whether sexual or non-sexual, should be taken up and utilized for the development of the higher faculties? To this another point may be briefly added. Energy which undergoes sublimation becomes in that process changed in nature. A tree develops out of an acorn, but who without knowledge of the fact would dare to suggest such a possibility? The two are so different in every respect. So in the process of sublimation psycho-sexual energy becomes transformed, and expresses itself in the highest form of spiritual activity. When sublimated, that is, it ceases to be sexual in nature, and religion therefore, strictly speaking, does not partake of sexual emotion at all.

But as we have already indicated in our brief review of medical psychology, the term 'sexual' as used by Freud covers love in general—whether it be love of parent, child, or friend; and if religion depends on a redirection of the love of life from unworthy or less worthy to more worthy objects—to the highest object of all—God, then there should be no objection to a psychology of religion which attempts to account for spiritual experience along this line. Indeed,

throughout the New Testament, love to Christ or to God is represented as the most vital element in religion. If we conceive of conversion in this way—as the occasion of the diversion of our love and affection from lower objects and pursuits and their direction towards spiritual ideals—if it means the creation of new and spiritual centres of life's energy—then the great function of evangelistic preaching is to bring about such a change.

Before leaving this part of our subject there is another view of the unconscious that fills an important place in modern psychology. If we accept the Freudian theory alone, then the unconscious must be conceived of as containing only experiences of an archaic kind—ideas and feelings that are repugnant to ordinary moral and religious standards. Dr. Jung, in his theory of the 'collective unconscious,' presents us with a different view. He admits that the unconscious contains all that Freud finds in it, but Freud's account deals only with individual experience, and leaves untouched those tendencies that have been transmitted to us from the past, and are common to the race. These Jung speaks of as 'nascent thought-feelings.' They are the sort of material out of which the myths of primitive times were formed, and from which develops the religious consciousness. This theory of the unconscious is much more easily reconciled with our common views on religion than the Freudian theory. According to it all the good of the past, as well as the evil, finds a place in the unconscious, and the elements of good contained in the unconscious are conceived of as ever striving for definite, conscious expression.

Building up a psychology of religion on this basis, we claim that the religious consciousness becomes possible only on the ground of a religious unconsciousness. Some of the 'nascent thought-feelings' that is, are of a religious nature, and are seeking expression in religious life and activity. Jung's theory comes closer to the position of William James than to that of Freud, but he differs from James in regarding the elements out of which the religious consciousness develops as racial as well as individual. Religious experience does not depend alone on the religious training of the individual. Every one possesses a capacity for religion, and this, of course, is helped to develop under the influence of religious training. Further, the theory of Jung accounts much more thoroughly than that of James for the conflict which usually precedes conversion. The general principles that explain this conflict we owe more, perhaps, to Freud than to Jung, but their application to religious conflict is more easily understood in the light of Jung's theory of the unconscious. For the basis of the conflict is not between unconscious archaic tendencies and the conscious tendencies of a high moral order. The reverse is the case. It is the spiritual tendencies that are kept in check by all that is purely animal in our nature. If the meaning of the term 'repression' is extended so as to include the process by which religious tendencies are inhibited by incompatible conscious tendencies, we can understand what precedes conversion with all its accompanying feelings of depression, sense of failure, and the peculiar modes of behaviour to which it often leads.

CHAPTER IV

THE EVANGELISTIC METHOD

(I) CONVICTION

From what has been said at the end of the last chapter it is clear that the function of evangelistic preaching consists in bringing the conflict between antagonistic tendencies of the life to an issue, and providing a successful solution to inward disharmony. It is only another way of stating the same thing to assert that the primary aim of evangelistic preaching is to save men from the sense of guilt or the power of sin, or to make them like Christ. Guilt, as we shall presently explain, is based on a conflict arising out of the difference between the actual and the ideal, and to remove the sense of guilt the conflict must be dealt with. Similarly it is only possible to make men like Christ when the un-Christlike spirit, the primitive tendencies, are brought into subjection to the claims of the spiritual life. It may be concluded, therefore, that evangelistic preaching has as its primary aim the bringing of the inner conflict to an issue and to a successful solution. This statement of the main function of Evangelism explains the joy and overwhelming sense of peace that are the first-fruits of conversion—facts which the psychology of religious experience has always fully taken into account. Peace naturally follows the cessation of conflict, harmony

from the unifying of the life about spiritual centres, the synthesis of conflicting tendencies.

Our task now is to consider the evangelistic method. How, it may be asked, does evangelistic preaching bring the inner conflict to a crisis and an end? What is the method by which evangelistic preaching reaches its goal? Recent psychology is particularly illuminating just here, and certain factors in the method of psycho-analysis should be kept in view. In the first place, in the method which psycho-analysis offers an important essential is self-knowledge. No patient can ever be healed unless the forgotten past is brought to consciousness. The cause of a man's mental breakdown may have been some shock experienced in the first years of life. No relief can come until the memory of this shock has been recovered and its nature understood. The orthodox school of psycho-analysis, as we have seen, holds firmly to the view, that the traumatic experiences that lie at the root of mental disease have all to do with the sexual instincts, and that these instincts operate in a peculiarly strong way even in the lives of children. Disease is thus traced to some early perversion of the sexual instincts. But the main factor in the production of disease is not the perversion itself so much as its repression. In other words, it is refusal on our part to acknowledge to ourselves some of the fundamental tendencies and desires of life that lie at the basis of many forms of mental illness. Self-ignorance is in many cases fatal to health. Nor is this idea peculiar to psycho-analysis alone. Socrates, it is well known, advocated self-analysis as the pre-requisite to the

acquisition of knowledge. No advance could be made in learning until the pupil was made conscious of his own ignorance. This in fact, was the first step in knowledge. For purposes of the moral life too, knowledge was essential. Vice is ignorance, virtue is knowledge. Here as well as in recent psychology frank recognition and acknowledgement of one's real state are helpful for both the mental and the moral life.

What is true in the sphere of medicine and morals is true also in that of religion. Long before self-knowledge was discovered as a main factor in mental healing the evangelist discovered its value in spiritual healing. There is indeed a very close parallel between the physician who practises psycho-analysis and the preacher who aims at the salvation of souls. Each is engaged in the task of delivering men from the tyranny of the past—or if we like from the tyranny of his lower nature—and each employs pretty much the same method. For the first great business of the preacher, if he is to win a soul, is to bring that soul to the knowledge of its own spiritual helplessness and need. It has not been the fashion for some time to preach human depravity. The picture of human nature set forth for example in Luther's 'Bondage of the Will,' with its insistence on the depravity and helplessness of the natural man, has been regarded as grossly untrue, while the teaching of Wesley—one of the sanest and most effective of evangelists—on this subject is treated with scorn. Probably evolution in some of its aspects, and other phases of modern science, have been responsible for this change of thought

and feeling in our estimate of man ; but it is more likely to be due to the universal tendency emphasized by psycho-analysis to turn away from the painful in our experience.

The tendency to an over-emphasis of the goodness of human nature which characterizes so much modern preaching is not true to the facts of life. The older point of view, with its insistence on the sinfulness of man—the evil possibilities of the human heart—is most certainly that supported by recent psychology. Let us give one or two quotations that may be regarded as typical—‘ We are all animals, and can never cease to be our human ancestors have lived in savagery during practically the whole existence of the race, say five hundred thousand or a million years, and the primitive human mind is ever with us. We know of blind animal rage, of striking, biting, scratching, howling, and snarling, of irrational fears and ignominious flight.’¹ Writers on crowd psychology substantiate the same truth. They show that a man’s conduct often differs widely as a member of a group from what it is habitually. Let him become one of a mob in which individual restraint is cast aside, and the animal and irrational immediately rule. A man in a crowd often becomes guilty of behaviour that as an isolated member of society he would not acknowledge himself capable of. Le Bon, McDougall, and Freud, when dealing with the psychology of the crowd, all agree on this point. A quotation from Freud will suffice. ‘ When individuals come together in a group

¹ J. H. Robinson, *The Mind in the Making*, pp. 65-68.

all their individual inhibitions fall away, and all the cruel brutal instincts which lie dormant in individuals as relics of a primitive epoch are stirred up to find free gratification.’¹ The theory of psycho-analysis is wholly based on this view, and its influence is now fully seen in general literature. The modern novel speaks of civilization as no more than a veneer which serves to hide rather than remove the egoistic and primitive in human life. Thus mental development, group psychology, and psycho-analysis—three phases of modern psychology—all combine to show the strength and universality of those impulses that man shares with the lower animals.

This peculiar emphasis of modern psychology has drawn upon it considerable criticism not only from orthodox psychologists but from theologians as well. These argue that recent psychology does not do justice to the other side of human nature. It should be remembered, however, that the psychology with which we are dealing arose out of the study of mental disease, at the root of which were discovered certain forms of instinctive perversion. It does not question the fact that there is much real goodness in human nature, but it shows how important it is in the best interests of health not to neglect, as we have been inclined to do, the great strength as well as the existence in every life of primitive instinct. Moreover, it is strange that we should take exception to the findings of modern psychology when Jesus Himself described human nature in practically the same terms. Thus He

¹ Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, p. 17.

tells us that 'out of the heart¹ proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.' Recent psychology likewise finds the springs and motives of all forms of crime in the unconscious. Further, Jesus showed an insight into the source of disease that in the light of present-day medical psychology is amazing. They brought to Him a man sick of the palsy. Christ, instead of dealing directly with the disease itself, went straight to its roots. In saying 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' He revealed His knowledge of the close connexion between sin and disease in at least some of its forms, or, to put it psychologically, between perversion of instinct and disease. There is really no difference between the psychological expression 'perversion of instinct' and the Biblical and theological expression 'sin' except a difference that is verbal. Very little thought will reveal the fact that every sin we commit is a perversion of instinct. This is true not only of the sins of adultery, fornication, or homo-sexuality, which are perversions of the sexual instincts, but also of pride, covetousness, greed, envy, &c., which are perversions of the instincts of self-preservation. Thus Evelyn Underhill, in *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day*, p. 67, writes: 'In an organized society the acquisitiveness and self-assertion proper to a vigorous primitive, dependent on his own powers, survive as the sins of envy and covetousness, and are seen operating in the dishonesty of the burglar, the greed and egotism of the profiteer ;

¹ The 'heart' as here used roughly signifies the 'unconscious' in Freudian psychology.

and on the highest levels the great spiritual sin of pride may be traced back to a perverted expression of that self-regarding instinct without which we could hardly survive.'

Evangelistic preaching has always gone on the assumption of man's sinfulness, and its first concern has been to bring home to him his lost condition, to turn the eyes of a man round upon himself—to convince him of sin. Many of the hymns sung at revival services, as well as the type of address given, have a real value in this regard.

Search all my thoughts, the secret springs,
The motives that control,
The chambers where polluted things
Hold empire o'er the soul.

Sentiments of this kind that lead to self-analysis or heart-searching not only meet the requirements of evangelism but of modern psychology as well.

Mere reflection on one's inner state, however, is not sufficient, for it is possible that a man may have real knowledge of himself and yet remain perfectly self-complacent. So long as this continues, evangelistic preaching will meet with very little response. The real problem in evangelism is how to get rid of self-satisfaction, and create that sense of need which in Christ receives satisfaction. The problem becomes one of feeling. Not only must a man *know* his condition, but he must *feel* it. There must be awakened in him a sense of guilt, with that consciousness of failure and self-reproach which always accompanies it.

Recent psychology is taking into account the feeling of guilt, and is helping us to understand its meaning

in a way that may yet prove fruitful for the psychology of religion. Thus Freud speaks of a 'differentiating grade in the ego'—a sort of split in the ego that takes place under the influence of social, moral, and religious training. One part remains the real ego, representing the life as it is—dominated largely by instinct. The other part becomes an 'ego ideal,' embodying the principles inculcated through education and religious teaching; it represents not what is, but what ought to be; it is the source of conscience, and of the feeling of self-abasement a man often experiences. On the extent of the difference between the ego and the ego ideal depends the degree of intensity of the sense of guilt. In children there is at first no sense of guilt—no conscience,—for the ego ideal has not yet been developed. In adults the ego ideal may still remain merged in the real ego, or if it has developed it may differ so little from the latter that the sense of guilt can scarcely be experienced; and so there remains that sense of self-complacency the removal of which is — the most difficult task of the evangelist. But this is the task to which he must first address himself; for, as in psycho-therapy it is important to make a patient feel his illness intolerable that he may co-operate with the physician in the search for health, so a man must be got to feel his sense of spiritual need before it is possible for him to desire, much more obtain, salvation.

CHAPTER V

THE EVANGELISTIC METHOD

(II) CONFESSION

Modern psychology lays considerable stress on that is known as 'abreaction'—a process indispensable to the cure of a mental sufferer. The term signifies the break-up of the repressed complex and the training off of the invested emotion. Complex is a word which technically signifies a group of ideas which, on account of their peculiar emotional tone, have been driven into the unconscious. We can conceive of all sorts of complexes buried in the depths of the psyche. According to psycho-analysis the most harmful of these is the father complex—a group of ideas formed out of a hostile attitude towards the father. Another harmful complex which, according to Adler, lies at the root of much mental trouble is that which is formed out of certain feelings of inferiority which are produced in early days when children find themselves opposed and their wills thwarted in many ways.

There are also religious complexes formed out of those ideas inculcated through religious teaching and example from the earliest years. We have referred to these in Chapter III. Just like all complexes, these also strive for a place in consciousness. Their presence is made known in the sense of restlessness that they produce in the individual, and in extreme

behaviour of a sinful kind. We are not to suppose that the man who is aggressively and flagrantly sinful is the farthest from the Kingdom. Some forms of sin are a reaction against unconscious spiritual strivings. I have made special inquiries from men and women who have been addicted to the drinking of methylated spirits as to their reason for this indulgence. Those accustomed to ordinary alcoholism will reply in various ways, but most of them are inclined to blame their social instincts. Few will find pleasure in drinking alone, and some would never have been drunkards were it not for the entreaties of their companions. But the drinker of methylated spirits can never offer this as the reason for his vice. He drinks alone and goes alone to drink. The answers I received of all from whom I made inquiries were similar. They indulged so as to get rid of inward restlessness—to get away from reality and enter the world of delusion and phantasy. Many of them confessed that for years they felt they ought to be Christians, and that they became outwardly and grossly sinful so as to drown the divine voice.

Some of the stories of great conversions bear out our contention that frequently aggressiveness in the sinful life is but a symptom pointing to the action of strong buried complexes of a spiritual nature. Paul's conversion is a striking example. Let us quote the account of it given by C. G. Jung from the standpoint of modern psychology: 'St. Paul had already been a Christian for a long time, but unconsciously; hence his fanatical resistance to the Christians, because fanaticism exists chiefly in individuals who are compensating for secret

doubts. The incident of the hearing the voice of Christ on his way to Damascus marks the moment when the unconscious complex of Christianity became conscious Unable to conceive of himself as a Christian and on account of his resistance to Christ, he became blind, and could only regain his sight through submission to a Christian, that is to say, through his complete submission to Christianity.¹ Augustine's spiritual history may be referred to in the same connexion. He had a mother who prayed and longed for her son's conversion. He, however, became a profligate of the worst kind, indulged in all forms of vile and open sin, and went to Italy that he might have greater freedom to indulge his passions. But his conversion and after-life prove that his recklessness was but a sort of defence mechanism against the intrusion of the unconscious religious complex of Christianity.

In a recent publication² the story of the life conversion of a criminal written by himself while awaiting execution bears out the same truth. Ishii lived a life of extreme cruelty and viciousness. He was the subject of over-mastering hatred and anger. Whenever his will in the pursuit of crime was thwarted he made up his mind that some day he would have vengeance by taking the lives of those who opposed him. Nothing short of murder seemed to satisfy his thirst for revenge. On three occasions he took the lives of others in the most brutal and callous manner.

¹ Quoted by Thouless, *Introduction to the Psychology of Religion*, p. 190.

² *A Gentleman in Prison*, published by C. S. M.

Yet all the time there were signs of another Ishii as well as the one steeped in crime. There was the Ishii that would have suffered anything rather than that a child should suffer—the Ishii who experienced mental torture for the crimes of his ‘other self,’ and who in prison confessed his own sin that an innocent man might escape. Between these two ‘personalities,’ the expressions of the conflicting and powerful passions of a strange soul, war seemed continually to rage. Like Paul, ‘the good that he would he did not, and the evil that he would not that he did.’ Like Paul also, mysterious blindness came upon him, which we may interpret as the symptom of his unwillingness to see, i.e. to submit to the higher impulses of his nature. At last, as he read the story of Christ’s crucifixion, and especially Christ’s prayer for His enemies, he was stabbed to the heart ‘as if by a five-inch nail,’ and the new Ishii, the Ishii that was always striving for expression, and against which the old Ishii reacted in extreme depredations, became the master. The story is full of psychological interest, but we introduce it here merely to support our contention that the man of extreme and aggressive sinfulness is not always the farthest from the Kingdom. Ishii tells us that he could not understand his recklessness. No one profited by it—least of all himself. There are subtle forms of sin through which men may attain some sort of satisfaction. But sins of the type in which Ishii and many another indulge are wholly irrational. Psychology throws light, however, on criminal conduct by showing that often it is the reaction in the form of a defence against unconscious complexes of an

opposite kind. If we follow the clue thus given, so far from regarding the man of open and blatant sinfulness as hopeless, we shall see in every criminal a possible saint, and understand, paradoxical as it may seem, that the one is not far removed from the other.

We have dealt in the last chapter with the need of self-analysis—the knowledge of one's real state—as the first step towards salvation. This, however, is not sufficient. Just as in psycho-therapy, so in spiritual healing, recognition of one's past, recall of forgotten experiences, in themselves will not guarantee cure. The complexes must be broken up and an outlet created for the pent-up emotion. At the close of the last chapter we emphasized the necessity of feeling one's state as well as apprehending it intellectually; but even this is not enough. It is possible to conceive of a man stopping short at the feeling state, and this, especially if the feeling is intense, may be fraught with the greatest perils for the mental life. Revivalists who emphasize the fact of sin and stop there frequently run the risk of creating an intolerable sense of mental depression, often issuing in the delusion that the unpardonable sin has been committed, or in other forms of religious mania.

In the first case to which the psycho-analytic method was applied, both Breuer and Freud saw the value of the free expression by the patient of her feelings. The patient herself, after healing had been restored, spoke of the cure as the 'talking-cure.' What is called the method of free-association, in which absolutely unhampered talk is encouraged—the patient being urged to give unfettered expression to every

idea as it enters the mind—has ever remained an essential in the method of psycho-analysis. Indeed, the value of free expression of feeling has always been understood by those in trouble. Few people can keep their troubles locked up in their own breasts. They search out for trusted friends into whose ears they pour, with considerable relief to themselves, their tale of woe. If the grief is great, more than the telling of the story is necessary. Tears must be shed. A few years ago it was my duty to attend the funeral of a woman to whom her children, grown up to manhood and womanhood, were attached with a more than ordinary affection. They made friends of none outside the circle of their own home. The mother was the only idol of the family. When she died two of the daughters were so grief-stricken that they collapsed nervously, and, though until then quite healthy, they passed away in a few weeks. A profuse shedding of tears would have saved them, but their grief was too intense to get relief in this way. Pent-up emotion is always dangerous; and if mental health and happiness are to be maintained, an outlet for it must be discovered.

Free expression of one's religious difficulties and feelings in the same way is both mentally and spiritually of the greatest value. This is why the confessional has always been the bulwark of the Roman Catholic communion. It has met one of the abiding spiritual needs of the people. If men really feel the guilt of sin they must pour their feelings into the ear of some one. The Protestant churches claim that it is sufficient for men to confess their sins to Christ. Hence they

repudiate the confessional, since, for one thing, it usurps the priestly office of Christ, and also lends itself to abuses of various kinds. There is no doubt that this is true, but at the same time no one can deny that the confessional has met a real human need in troubled hearts.

Protestants too, while safeguarding the priestly functions of Christ, who alone can offer forgiveness to the penitent, have fully recognized the need of some form of human confession. The strength of Methodism, for example, has been its class-meetings. These afford fellowship to groups of Christians. But the minister is seldom the leader, and inasmuch as it is a common fellowship there is no risk of falling into the abuses of the Roman confessional. While the class-meeting is designed for fellowship, it is really a mutual confessional, for those who speak seldom fail to give utterance to their feelings of sinfulness. The present 'Fellowship of the Kingdom Movement' is on right lines when it is helping to resuscitate the fellowship that for some time has lapsed in Methodist communions. "Confess your sin one to another and pray for one another," is the injunction of Scripture, and it is wise teaching, not only religiously but psychologically.

The confession that fills a place in Christian fellowship and is essential to the growth of the spiritual life must, however, be distinguished from that of the penitent heart. Sin-burdened souls as a rule feel an impulse to make confession to someone, and as long as they refrain relief is not experienced. In the story of Ishii's conversion there is a much closer relation than he himself recognizes between the con-

fession of his crime and his salvation. He not only felt it necessary to confess the crime for which an innocent man was condemned, but to make a clean breast of all his sinful past. Similarly, in all revivals confession, accompanied in many cases by restitution, is constantly practised. The inquiry-room in connexion with special missions is provided, not merely that the penitent soul may receive sound and sensible advice, but that confession of sin may be made. Such an act as the first recital of sins that for long we have hidden from others and have tried to hide from ourselves, is bound to relieve an intolerable burden.

Thus the evangelistic method in which conviction of sin and confession are both regarded as pre-requisites to salvation is, thanks to the findings of recent psychology, receiving new emphasis to-day. It is true that between the abreaction process and confession, there is a great difference. Abreaction never pretends to get beyond the psychological level; confession has a high ethical and spiritual value. It is not merely the recovery of forgotten experience, but also the acknowledgement of what is conceived of as sin—and this as the condition of reconciliation with God. All the same the parallel is so close between the analytic method in medical psychology and the evangelistic method, that evangelism is now receiving—what it has never received before—the powerful corroboration of science.

CHAPTER VI

THE EVANGELISTIC METHOD

(III) FAITH

Freud has come to the conclusion that the most potent factor in psycho-therapy is neither self-knowledge nor abreaction, but 'transference,' Let us explain what he means. In pursuing a psycho-analysis there usually comes a stage when the patient offers strong resistance to any further efforts on the physician's part to get at the root of his trouble. This resistance expresses itself in all sorts of ways. The patient may refuse further sittings, or adopt an attitude of anger towards the physician. When the resistance is broken down there usually follows a mental condition in which the patient expresses the warmest affection for the analyst. This attitude is known as transference. In it 'the patient,' to quote Freud, 'who ought to be thinking of nothing but the solution of his own distressing conflicts, begins to develop a particular interest in the person of the physician, everything connected with whom seems to him more important than his own affairs and to distract him from his illness. Relations with the patient then become for a time very agreeable ; he is particularly docile, endeavours to show his gratitude wherever he can, and exhibits a fineness of character and other good qualities which we had perhaps not anticipated

in him. The analyst thus forms a very good opinion of the patient, and values his luck in being able to render assistance to such an admirable personality. If the physician has occasion to see the patient's relatives he hears with satisfaction that this esteem is mutual. The patient at home is never tired of praising the analyst and attributing new virtues to him. 'He has quite lost his head over you ; he puts implicit trust in you ; everything you say is like a revelation to him,' say his relatives. Here and there one among this chorus having sharper eyes will say : ' It is positively boring the way he never speaks of anything but you : he quotes you all the time ! '

What has to be noticed about transference, therefore, is (1) that it represents a change of attitude on the part of the patient. He turns his thoughts away from himself to the analyst. (2) It represents a state of feeling rather than one of intellect. Transference is always defined as a transference of feeling. It signifies a bond of union between patient and physician—an attitude of dependence on the part of the patient on the analyst—which must be described in affective terms. There is much in the psychological doctrine of transference that is suggestive of the faith on which Jesus laid so much stress. For Him it was an essential instrument of healing. Where it was absent He could do no mighty works. When He was able to call it into operation wonderful cures were wrought.

It is difficult for us to grasp what is meant by the term faith. Its meaning has become complex and obscure in theological definitions and discussions. But the doctrine of transference helps us to grasp its

principles when we keep before our minds the two characteristics mentioned above. It involves the substituting of an objective for a subjective attitude. The sufferer in the New Testament had to turn his thoughts from himself to the Great Physician. But this was only preliminary to an attitude of trust and dependence on Christ which is the essence of faith. C. H. Dodd, in his book *The Meaning of Paul for To-day*, says that 'the apostle's expression "faith to remove mountains," echoes a saying of Jesus Christ, and we shall not go far wrong in starting from the use Jesus made of the word. "Have faith in God," was the one condition He propounded to those who sought His help. By that is clearly meant trust, confidence directed towards God as the Father and Friend of men. This is the meaning of the word to Paul. As it is Christ who not only shows us the God in whom we trust, but who has also Himself cleared away the obstacles and made such trust possible, faith is alternatively described as the faith of Christ, or faith towards Christ. That, however, is for Paul in no way different from faith in God.'

Some writers seem to think that they have explained all Christ's miracles by the modern much-used term Auto-suggestion, and that this was the power that Jesus invoked under the name 'faith.' If this is true, it is a wonderful testimony to Christ's insight and knowledge of psychical laws. It means that in this respect Christ was two thousand years ahead of the race. But if faith means trust—and if trust is an affective rather than a cognitive state—then suggestion or auto-suggestion, which in Chapter I has been defined

as cognitive, and faith, are two entirely different things. Transference comes much nearer to the New Testament conception of faith than does suggestion. Faith, however, if we define it as transference, does not in itself explain the healing miracles of the New Testament. It is conditional and instrumental, but not the source of healing. It produced that attitude of mind towards Christ which made it possible for Him to exercise His healing power. He Himself in prayer sought this power, and He attributed it to His Father. Thus after healing the Gerasene demoniac, Jesus advised him, when he wished to follow Him, to go home and tell them what God had done for him. Transference, therefore, cannot explain Christ's secret of healing. For faith, which up to a point may be identified with transference, goes beyond it in that it recognizes God as the real source of all healing power. In another respect faith goes beyond transference. The latter process operates merely on the psychological level. Faith not only heals the mind but the soul as well. 'That which avails for healing avails to bring a patient into a new life in every regard. According to John, "he that believeth on the Son hath eternal life." This involves much more than a healing of symptoms; nothing less than a healing and heightening of the whole personality is contemplated.'¹

This brings us possibly to a more thorough appreciation of the meaning of faith, which in evangelism we lay down as a condition of salvation. Guided

¹ E. R. Micklem, *Miracles and the New Psychology*, p. 134.

by the mechanism of transference we come to see that before a sinner can have the peace of forgiveness he must turn away from the sin that he has already become painfully conscious of, to the Saviour. Instead of looking in, he must look up and out. Not until a sinner looks away from himself to Christ is salvation possible. Those who have taken part in the work of evangelism understand how important it is to get the mind of an inquirer centred on Christ. Some years ago I was called to see a man who was in great spiritual distress. Brought up in a godly home, he had led a wild and reckless life. He was now fifty years of age, and was in a state of deep conviction and concern about his soul. Somehow he had come to the conclusion that it was impossible for him to experience salvation, although there was nothing that he was not willing to abandon and no cross he was not prepared to bear if only he could become sure of his acceptance with God. The conviction had also been growing in him that if his present spiritual concern passed he would enter a state of hardness and spiritual indifference from which there could be no escape. The agony into which these thoughts had brought him was so great that he was dangerously near a state of mental collapse. I learned many things about the way in which a man under conviction of sin may be brought into peace from a few hours of personal dealing with this case. But one thing I found that, though simple, is of profound importance in evangelism—a sinner must cease to be absorbed in his own feelings and must turn to Christ. The secret of this man's despair was that he was occupied

with himself. He was in search of a certain kind of feeling which he regarded as the essential proof of his acceptance with God. His attitude was wholly subjective and introspective. In other words he was quite convinced of his sin, and had made confession, but he was not exercising saving faith, which means turning the mind to Christ as the only hope. The moment that this became clear to him the troubled waters of his soul were immediately at rest, and the consciousness he had agonized after became his possession.

But this objective attitude of saving faith, we must remember, is one, not of cold intellect, but rather of feeling. Often the term faith is used in an intellectual sense. It signifies the rational beliefs on which our religion is based. In this sense of the word we hear of the difficulties of belief—we ask, ‘does faith need reasons?’ We are asked to ‘clear the ground for faith’ by explaining the inaccuracies of Scripture, or by harmonizing the problem of pain with the goodness of God, &c. The importance of all this is not for a moment to be denied. But I do not think that in real evangelism these questions ever enter. For when a man is under conviction of sin it is his own life that is his real concern. He is not dwelling on the intellectual level pure and simple, where only rational subtleties and apparent inconsistencies concern him. He is more on the level of feeling, and is anxious beyond everything else about his soul’s relationship to God. The faith which he needs is different from intellectual assent. It is possible to conceive of a man thinking his way through all the problems of the Christian religion, and yet never exercising

the faith that saves. It is possible, on the other hand, for a man to exercise the faith that saves who has never been able to solve certain theological problems.

The difference between intellectual and affective or saving faith was fully recognized by Wesley, and forms the subject of one of his sermons. 'Saving Faith,' he says, 'is not only an assent to the whole Gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ, a trust in the merits of His life, death, and resurrection ; a recumbency upon Him as our atonement and our life, as given for us, and living in us, and in consequence thereof a closing with Him, and cleaving to Him, as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, or in one word, our salvation.'¹

This is the faith—faith which implies an affective attitude of absolute trust in Christ crucified—which it is the business of the evangelist to evoke as the primary and immediate condition of salvation. In doing so two things are requisite on his part. (1) Every evangelist must understand the mechanism of faith. (2) He must understand how to use such stimuli to faith as are at his disposal. Since the great problem of a penitent is how to get rid of sin, the power of Christ to save must be made perfectly clear. Salvation is something that changes the whole fabric of a man's life, enabling him to break with life-long habits, and creating a new disposition, involving a complete alteration in the direction of his instinctive tendencies. Doubts may easily arise as to whether Christ can perform such a miracle. The best method of dispelling these doubts is by the actual witness

¹ *Sermon I.*, sect. i. 5.

of such miracles. Let men who are admittedly wicked become changed into saints, and such facts will compel faith on the part of others as nothing else can do. Coué understands the power of demonstration in aiding auto-suggestion. For he brings a number of patients together, so that the cure of one may stimulate the faith of others. The same sort of thing works in evangelism. It is easier for a man to exercise saving faith when others around him are getting saved, than if he were alone in his search for peace. For this reason the testimony of young converts will often be of the greatest value in revival services.

In another way also the faith of a penitent may be stimulated. Since saving faith is faith in Christ—obviously Christ must be so presented that it will be easy to exercise faith in Him. The harsh note is alien to evangelistic preaching. The gospel to be proclaimed is good news. Christ's willingness and ability to save men, Christ's character in all its uniqueness, Christ's suffering—these are the theme of the evangelist. The more vividly they are presented the more readily can saving faith be called forth.

CHAPTER VII

THE EVANGELISTIC METHOD

(IV) CONVERSION

In the three preceding chapters we have been dealing with factors that are vital both for mental and spiritual

recovery. Those mechanisms on which modern psychotherapy lays emphasis as essential for the cure of the mentally deranged have been found to have had a close parallel in the methods employed in evangelism. It is obvious, however, that we have been dealing only with conditions the fulfilment of which is the necessary pre-requisite to conversion—the end aimed at in all evangelism. Let us now consider this vital experience of the soul, using once more the suggestions afforded by medical psychology.

It was not long until Freud came to the conclusion that the discovery and up-rooting of an unhealthy complex did not necessarily remove all the symptoms of disease, or bring about freedom from mental suffering. The energy or emotion that has been tied to a particular complex, on being let loose, must be re-directed into other channels. If the morbid ideas in which it has been invested are broken up, new and healthy ones must be provided to receive it, otherwise the energy will create for it new paths that will make little or no improvement, or it may be that the old paths will be re-opened, which means a relapse into the former state of illness.

In psycho-analysis a clear distinction is drawn between displacement of affect and sublimation. In displacement energy can be transferred from one group of ideas to another without any accompanying improvement in the mental or moral life. Sublimation, on the other hand, indicates a diversion of affect with improvement. 'It is called sublimation because it sublimates the crude ideas of the unconscious. Just as the alchemists in the early days of science thought

that they could transmute the baser metals into gold, so the philosophers have found that we can change the direction and object of the baser desires into higher ones having in them more gold—that is more value—for the modern development of society.’¹

The distinction between displacement and sublimation is one that throws much needed light on the difference between spurious and real conversion. Much of what passes under the name of conversion is simply a change in the expression of life’s energy without any great improvement or enhancement of character as the result. Every Sunday afternoon I have occasion to pass by a certain open-air meeting. The leader is a man whose facial expression would commend religion to no one. He is bitter and cynical in the extreme. His only gospel is one of fire and brimstone, and regularly he declares that God has commissioned him to preach this and no other gospel.

It is difficult to understand how a man can take evident pleasure in the eternal torture of the souls of others, but psychology furnishes an explanation. Before his ‘conversion’ this man was dominated by irrational hatreds. The change that he experienced did not involve the removal of these impulses. They continued in a new form. For bitterness and hatred is the same whether it expresses itself in the guise of religion or not. What happened in this man’s case was that the natural expression of the cruel impulses was checked, chiefly because they were anti-social and brought the man into conflict with the ordinary standards of ‘civilized life, but they found a new outlet

¹ Layman’s *Unconscious Conflict*, p. 81.

in the idea of a God who takes delight in punishment. In the thought and proclamation of this he finds constant satisfaction.

Conversion that only amounts to an alteration of the direction of a particular passion is not worth very much. Men may cease from drunkenness and other gross forms of sin, but if instead they become censorious, ultra-critical, given to strife and back-biting, they have not been genuinely converted. In the psychological term 'sublimation' we get the idea that helps us best to appreciate what is implied in real conversion. Often the word is defined as a change in the goal or aim of any impulse. Thus if we take the impulse to cruelty which naturally seeks to inflict pain on others—under sublimation it becomes a gift that may benefit society, as for example in the skilled surgeon. When an anti-social tendency is so changed that it makes for the welfare of others, then it has undergone sublimation. But the word strictly means more than this. It denotes a fundamental change in the emotional life, so that the anti-social impulses themselves become changed. Thus the cruel instinct gives place to the tender emotions which, when strong, lead to such development as the anti-vivisection movement and that for the prevention of cruelty to children.

Consideration of the change that in a man's life follows conversion seems to show indisputably that this is what takes place in conversion. For with the birth of new interests the old ones disappear. Let God become a living reality to a man, and the sins of his life are at once cut off. He cannot himself explain why it is that his attitude and feeling towards

certain objects and indulgences become suddenly reversed—why he hates the things he loved and loves the things he hated. The reason is that the course of the libido has been changed, and is now flowing in the opposite direction. To put the matter in the language of religion—the love of self gives place to the love of Christ. The heart, which is the seat and centre of all feeling, becomes changed, and consequently conduct and character become altered. This is real conversion. It involves more than a ‘displacement of affect.’ It implies a real change in the emotional nature corresponding to the birth of a new personality, lived on altogether higher levels morally, socially, and spiritually.

In viewing conversion as a form of sublimation one point has to be dealt with which from the standpoint of evangelistic preaching is of some importance. If the primary aim of the evangelist is to produce conversion or bring about sublimation, then it would seem that evangelistic preaching is to be directed only towards those whose lives are entirely evil—whose baser instincts have been allowed free expression. It is the glory of evangelistic preaching that it has had its best results amongst men of this class. It is the gambler, the drunkard, the wastrel, the profligate, to whom evangelism has most appealed, and from whom the greatest number of responses have been made. The chief justification of evangelistic preaching is this, that suddenly it has produced the highest degree of sublimation, it has transformed the worst into the best. No other type of preaching can claim results of this kind.

There are, however, two other classes beside the unsublimated to be considered in relation to evangelism. In the first place there are those who seem to have reached in religious experience under other influences than that of evangelistic preaching the same spiritual levels as those whose lives suddenly undergo conversion. Children who are brought up in a religious atmosphere, and are wisely trained, often gradually and unconsciously attain the highest possible degree of sublimation without passing through any spiritual crises. They are the 'once-born' of whom William James writes. This does not imply that they had no objectionable traits to get rid of. A present-day psychological expert tells us that every child in his natural state is a selfish, jealous, impulsive, aggressive, dirty, immodest, cruel, ego-centric and conceited animal, inconsiderate of the needs of others, and unmindful of the complicated social and ethical standards that go to make up a civilized society.¹ This may be a one-sided description of child-life, and Dr. Jones would not deny that there are other qualities which every child manifests. But the facts as he has described them are true for all that.

Now up to a certain age children are not held morally accountable for unsocial tendencies, but there comes a time when society will no longer tolerate them. They must then be either repressed or else the individual must be banished from decent society. The latter alternative creates those groups from which the gaols and work-houses are recruited, men who become drunken, criminal, and generally anti-social.

¹. Ernest Jones, *Papers on Psycho-Analysis*, p. 124.

They are the unsublimated class of whom we have already spoken, to whom evangelistic preaching is especially directed. The other alternative, that of the repression of all anti-social tendencies, usually takes place under the influence of early education. It is most successful when carried through under the influence of religious teaching and example. These factors, and not evangelistic preaching, have often been agencies in bringing about the best type of religious experience. There are always those of whom it may be said, 'From a babe thou hast known the Sacred Writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.'

In such cases the end arrived at in evangelistic preaching has been otherwise attained. Obviously in dealing with these it would be unjust to insist on the need of a spiritual crisis of the kind through which the man of unsublimated life passes. They cannot be brought to feel the sense of sin or to experience repentance in the same way. But they have reached experience of the love of God, which is the chief content of the religious consciousness. Medical psychologists are putting forward the plea that all criminals should not be treated alike. The past history and training, as well as the ancestry, of each law-breaker should be taken into account before a sentence is passed. For this reason a medical expert should be attached to every law-court. Something of the same concern to understand an individual's past and present should be insisted on in connexion with evangelism. In revival services there is too great a tendency to deal with men, who differ widely in temperament and

training, in exactly the same way. There should be more personal dealing. And where this is provided care should be taken that unqualified workers, men incapable of appreciating differences of personal upbringing, and who think that their own experience is the model for everyone else, should not be allowed a free-hand in the inquiry-room. For frequently amongst troubled souls are to be found those who already are Christian, who never remember a time when they were not conscious of the love of Christ, but who were led to understand that conversion—in the sense of a catastrophic change—was essential for even their salvation.

We have considered those who under the influence of evangelism have experienced a sudden and complete change of life. And we have referred to a second class who under the influence of godly teaching and example have early in life gradually reached the same levels of religious experience. There is a third class to be considered, viz., those who under social pressure have undergone partial sublimation. Many of the primitive instincts are repressed, and the energy withdrawn from these finds expression in cultural activities of various forms—in literature, art, music, &c. These, together with the activities connected with ordinary duty, are the products of sublimated energy.

There are others of the same class who add to the life of ordinary duty, and aesthetic and literary achievement, an interest in civic, political, or philanthropic movements. Not only do they possess general good character of a negative sort, but one of a positive kind as well, expressing itself in socially helpful activity.

The question that now concerns us is the relation in which men of this type stand to evangelistic preaching. Are we to suppose because his outward life is in accordance with the highest social and moral standards, that evangelistic preaching is not for him? The answer depends on where exactly a man of the type we have been describing stands in his inward life. It is quite possible to be deceived in the man of outward goodness. His high-toned morality may be formal, and based merely on grounds of expediency. Even if he manifests a philanthropic spirit his motives may be purely selfish. One of the commonest ways of advancing one's own interests is to support social or philanthropic movements. Hobbes regarded all unselfishness as a form of selfishness. Even a mother's love is no exception. She sacrifices personal ease and comfort for her child in the hope of securing for herself later on the filial love and protection which old age requires. This of course is absurd; and Butler answers Hobbes satisfactorily in a well-known sentence, 'If there are some who have no natural affection for others, there are also some who have no natural affection for themselves.'

The difficulty, however, is to understand whether the philanthropist is actuated by love of self or love of others. If the former, then he cannot properly be called philanthropic. On the contrary he is highly Narcissistic,¹ and so he needs to be brought under the influence of evangelistic preaching quite as much as the man who is manifestly self-centred. He has not experienced genuine sublimation. The primitive, ego-

¹ A term taken from the Greek myth of the young Narcissus, who was in love with his own image.

centric tendencies are not removed, but only disguised. If, on the other hand, he has experienced genuine sublimation, it is obvious that evangelistic preaching cannot have precisely the same appeal in his case. It can be no part of the evangelist's task in such a case to convict of actual sinfulness. This type of man must be approached from a different angle. It is possible to convince him that while he has abstained from positive sinfulness, and has succeeded in reaching a high degree of sublimation, yet it is necessary to go higher. Sin in the case of this man must not be defined as 'transgression of the law' but rather as 'missing the mark.' It is here evangelistic preaching surpasses psycho-therapy. The latter aims only at enabling a man to break with his past and make successful adjustment to life. But no man can be conceived of as reaching the highest until in his own experience he has become conscious of the love of God, and until the life of the spirit becomes to him a reality. Religious experience is unknown to many a genuine moralist and philanthropist, and until it is attained the highest that is possible has not been reached.

Let us finally test the contention of this chapter by a reference to the spirit of the New Testament evangelism. Our thesis has been that the doctrine of sublimation, which is the leading factor in modern psycho-therapy, is also a chief factor in evangelism. It is not sufficient that the sinner should realize and acknowledge his sinfulness; he must turn away from it to a life of positive goodness and usefulness. The energy dissipated or expended in selfish ways must be directed into socially helpful channels. This is in

harmony with Christ's own method of dealing with men. It is very definitely implied in the parable by which He described the Pharisaic religionists of His day. 'The unclean spirit when he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth it not. Then he saith, I will return to my house whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first.' True psychological insight is displayed here. It is of no use to empty the house of the old contents unless new ones are put in their place. Psychologically it is impossible for a man to live without some interests, and if the evangelist so attacks a man's pet sins that he withdraws his interest from them, but fails to supply him with new objects in which he may invest his interest, the inevitable happens. Not only will the interest or libido return to the old channels and be re-invested in the old sins, but having been pent up for some time it will return to the old forms of life with greater force and intensity than ever. This is always the danger of negative preaching. Not only must sin be repressed, but new outlets for the energy of life must be provided. Hence it is that Christ always declared a positive gospel. He called men to a new life of positive goodness and service for others. His message to Philip was 'Follow Me'; to Simon and Andrew, 'Follow Me, and I will make you to be fishers of men'; to all 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up

his cross daily and follow Me.' Thus in Christ's method of evangelism the emphasis is always on positive life and service. He knew that if men received the vision of new life and embraced it, the love for the old life, and so the old life itself, would disappear. In modern evangelism, therefore, we are not only following the trend of recent psychology, but are keeping true to New Testament evangelism when we plead for positive preaching. Sin should not be the sole theme of the evangelist, but rather the Cross, which while it reveals man to himself, reveals to him at the same time the love of God, and calls him to the truly Christian life of service and sacrifice.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PERSONAL QUALITIES OF THE EVANGELIST

Hitherto we have been concerned with those principles and methods of evangelism that, in the light of recent psychology, seem worthy of fresh investigation and new emphasis. The evangelist himself, however, as well as the aims and methods of evangelism, needs to be taken into account, and in this regard also psychology offers some fruitful suggestions. We shall not concern ourselves here with general questions of ministerial training and equipment, or with those natural gifts that make for pulpit efficiency. The value of these is not to be underestimated, but so far as psychology is concerned, we

are being taught that there are considerations more primary and important than even these.

In Chapter VI, when dealing with the psychological doctrine of transference, and the light it is casting on the mechanism of saving faith, we considered transference only from one point of view—that of the patient. The doctrine can also be looked at from the standpoint of the physician. Emphasis has been laid on the fact that transference is not the end aimed at by the physician, but rather the means to an end. The goal in view is health, but this is not attained at the transference stage. Psycho-analysts regard it as imperative that transference must be left behind if cure is to be complete. It will not do for the patient to be tied to the analyst. So long as he depends on him, adopting towards him an infantile attitude, he cannot be said to have attained to health. The aim of every analysis is to lead the patient completely away from his infantility, from a childish attitude towards, and reliance upon others, to a life of self-mastery and independence. He must be capable of taking his place in life and going forward alone to undertake its tasks. Not till this stage is reached can a patient be pronounced cured. If the work of analysis is not carried beyond the transference stage, there will be frequent relapses into illness, and recurrence of the old symptoms. The reason is that the physician's presence is necessary to the maintenance of health. Let him be absent for any length of time, and the trouble returns.

This point is so very important that psycho-analysts strongly advocate the analysis of the physician as a

pre-requisite to successful work. Repressed complexes may possibly operate in the analyst, and lead him to adopt an erotic attitude towards his patient. This may be very harmful for the latter. Unconsciously he may seek the transference of the patient's positive feelings, and exploit these for self-gratification. The result may be very serious both for the patient and himself. Freud says that 'The transference, especially in the hands of an unscrupulous physician, is a dangerous instrument.'¹ Self-analysis is therefore laid down as indispensable to the skilled analyst. He is to get rid of his own unconscious complexes if the dangers of eroticism in one form or another are to be avoided.

In considering the personal qualities of the evangelist, the suggestions here offered cannot be ignored. The fact is that recent psychology is forcing us to recognize that spiritual experience and high Christian character are of paramount importance in true evangelism, and these are to be regarded as the primary qualifications of the evangelist. No revivalist can succeed in winning souls for Christ if he is not trusted and loved. He must possess a personality that will attract rather than repel men, and exhibit those qualities that appeal to the best in men if he is to be successful. In evangelism, as in everything else in life, it is what a man is rather than what he says that is all-important. The personal touch and the influence of a life are always the most potent factors in winning men.

Here the settled minister who is his own evangelist

¹ *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, p. 387.

has the advantage over the professional travelling evangelist. A missionary whose visit lasts but a few weeks has not the opportunity to draw to himself the love and confidence of the people as the regular pastor has. He may be suspected of mere professionalism, or material motives. This cannot be the case with the ordinary minister who daily lives in touch with his people. His character has been tested a thousand times, and the result is that either he has lost all influence or gained the respect and love of the people. It was Christ's own character, His sympathy with those in need, His effort to ameliorate human suffering, His defence of the weak and the fallen, His general compassionate nature, that drew to Him the crowds, and gave Him the opportunity to win them for Himself. Throughout the gospel records this fact is very prominent. Men so loved Christ both for what He was and for what He did, that they were as clay in His hands. Women were prepared to pour on Him the alabaster box of ointment, and to wash His feet with their tears. Men were willing to die for Him. Indeed, the relationship of every Christian to Christ may be expressed through the doctrine of transference. As we become Christians we love Christ supremely. We become bound to Him by the ties of affection. In such terms not only are the spiritual experiences of the great mystics from Paul onwards expressed, but also those of all true Christians.

In an analysis of the herd instincts Freud has recently brought his psychological insight to bear upon the Christian Church, and he comes to the conclusion

that what unites Christians together in the Church is the bond of affection by which each is bound to Christ. Loving Him, men love one another, and congregate together in groups to render Him common worship. Let men distrust Christ for any reason, and the group breaks up. The sundering of the tie that binds them to Christ leads automatically and immediately to the severance of those ties by which the several members of the group are united to one another. This is what has happened in those crises when the arguments of sceptics have for the time being robbed men of their faith in Christ. The Church has been thrown into a panic and the groups have broken up. With such a crisis the well-known novel *When it was Dark* deals. This book relates how the enemies of Christ and the Christian religion contrived the plan of discovering a tomb in Jerusalem in which was an inscription of Joseph of Arimathaea containing the confession that he had stolen the body of Christ and buried it here. In this way the Resurrection of Christ and His Deity are denied. The result is the immediate collapse of the Church, with a hasty and wide-spread revival of crime, and a return to the pre-Christian levels of civilization. Whatever criticisms we may offer on this book as a whole, there is no doubt that in the light of modern psychology there is much in it that is scientifically sound. The essence of the Christian life, we have affirmed, is the relation of affection in which men stand to Christ. Jesus always drew to Himself the love of men because of what He was, and what He did for them.

In winning men for Christ the evangelist will do well

to bear this in mind. We have been urging the necessity for attractiveness of personality, goodness and sympathy of life, on the ground that the evangelist, to be successful, must have the love and trust of those whom he would lead to Christ; but it is just here that the supreme danger emerges. How many evangelists secure the love of the people for themselves, but not for Christ? They stop short at the transference stage, making themselves its objects rather than its instruments. But such evangelism can never be successful. It is true that there may be in it redeeming efficacy. A preacher may, by the influence of his own personality, rescue men from gross sin. If they become tied to him in the bonds of affection or admiration they are bound to go with him, and the extent to which they are saved is due to the power of his own influence, and depends on the levels of his own spiritual life.

Usually, however, the last state of those who go thus far is worse than the first. For when the evangelist leaves, the tie soon breaks, and there is a return to the old habits of life. We have witnessed this not in isolated cases, but in that of whole masses of people who were led by a stirring evangelist to make profession of religion, but when the Mission was over and the hero had departed, there was a general drift on the part of those most affected back to the old levels of life. Movements of this kind are the despair of the settled minister, who has to bear the burden of discouragement, and who attempts to save the situation by seeking out some new evangelist, with probably similar results. The trouble in such cases is that the

evangelist has not done his work thoroughly. He has linked up men with himself, but not with Christ, and in the end the work has been worse than a failure. One may always be sure that this is what happens when the bulk of the converts adopt the language and methods of the evangelist, and take the cue for their own daily life and beliefs from him, and not from Christ. If such are to be held at all, they must be led on from mere trust in the Missioner to trust in Christ. The evangelist must more and more be put out of sight, except in so far as he represents Christ in his own life, and Christ must become the centre of man's hope and love.

We are not prepared to deny the possibility of a fall from grace, but even psychology suggests that the secret of spiritual failure is in imperfect attachment to Christ. Men fall because they have never been brought into a living relationship of love to Him. They have transferred their affections to their human ideal, but not to Christ, and so their Christian life becomes quite unstable and uncertain. Close observation of the itinerant system by which the Ministry of the Methodist Church is supplied bears out our contention that evangelism often stops short with the transfer of affections on to the human instrument. One of the draw-backs of the itinerary is that at the close of each three-years' period the congregation experiences something in the nature of a mental shock. Close bonds of sympathy and affection have been established in the course of the brief ministry, but these are snapped by the removal of the minister to a fresh sphere of operations. The incoming minister finds

for a while an atmosphere unfavourable to himself, but gradually wins his way into the esteem and love of his congregation, and there are once again created mutual bonds of affection. At the end of another three-year term these are again severed, and so there is begotten amongst the people that restlessness and instability that are all too characteristic of some congregations.

If in one sense the itinerancy is psychologically a hindrance, it may also become a source of strength. In a settled pastorate mere transfer of affection upon the minister may suffice for the smooth and successful working of the Church, but this will not do in a Church with a regularly changing ministry. The thought of the people must be more and more centred on Christ and less on the minister if the Church is to grow in strength. It may be claimed, therefore—apart from other advantages, such as freshness of the ministry and the opportunity that frequent changes offer a minister to be his own evangelist—that the itinerancy makes for the highest type of evangelism: that in which Christ and no mere human figure is placed first in the thought and affection of the people.

What has been just stated must not be taken as a disparagement either of the function or personality of the evangelist. To draw people to Christ it is necessary to draw them to himself, but the evangelist must remember that he is only the instrument by which men may be won for Christ. He must not glory in a sentimental over-valuation of himself, which practically amounts to adoration, but must rather seek the establishment of a feeling of affection between himself

and his people that will be truly moral and religious.

This brings us to recognize one indispensable requirement in every evangelist, viz., personal experience. Culture and training in method are in no way to be discounted. Especially is a thorough grounding in modern psychology necessary, if the undesirable excrescences of evangelism are to be avoided, but the one indispensable requirement is that he himself understands by experience the way to Christ. If in psycho-therapy self-analysis is regarded as essential before the work of analysing others is carried out, surely in the task of spiritual healing the evangelist's own spiritual condition is all-important. Christ Himself emphasized this when He warned us that 'if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.' He made sure that Peter's love for Him was real before He gave him His commission. It was after his conversion that Peter was to strengthen his brethren. Thus the New Testament backs up, and is backed up, by the suggestions of modern psychology, and both are a warning against mere professional evangelism. It is strange that in many of the most influential Churches this fact is ignored. Men are trained for the ministry just as they are for ordinary professions. The gateway into the sacred office is largely by way of examination tests. These are necessary, but first and most important is spiritual experience. If this is lacking, no other equipment can qualify a man for the function of saving souls. How can a man preach the Cross, which is the evangelist's central theme, if he has not been to the Cross? How can he preach Christ unless he can say with Paul, 'Not I, but Christ liveth

in me ? ' How can he avoid the danger of becoming unconsciously the sole centre of human attraction and affection, and deliberately seeking public favour for himself, unless the old self is crucified with Christ ? We need not deny that these are more than imaginary dangers. They are the besetting sins of too many evangelists.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

Recent psychology tends to reduce religious experience to psychical processes pure and simple. The objects of our religious faith are quite superfluous. Religion is wholly subjective, and can easily be accounted for by the principles of psychology. While we have not been discussing religious experience in general, but only the method by which it most frequently reaches the individual soul, it is necessary to offer some remarks now on the relation of psychology to theology. Indeed this is all the more necessary since we are dealing with the birth of the new life rather than with the new life itself.

We have been accustomed to speak of the Holy Spirit as the agent in regeneration, and all revivals have been attributed to His operations. A vital question now presents itself. Can the Holy Spirit be dispensed with ? Can evangelism be prosecuted without reference to Him ? From what has been written

in the fore-going pages this conclusion may appear possible. We have compared conversion to the psychical process of sublimation. May not the two be identical. And if so, why multiply hypotheses? If a psychology of evangelism is possible, why not dispense with the notion of the Holy Spirit altogether? Our answer is that there is no complete psychology of evangelism; that psychological principles are not adequate to explain spiritual experience. A two-fold distinction will serve to establish this contention.

First we ought to distinguish between the *immediate* and the *ultimate* cause of religious experience. If psychical processes are found to be the proximate determinants of spiritual phenomena, it does not follow that these are the ultimate determinants or explanation of these. At most, modern psychology has only modified our conception of the *modus operandi* of the Spirit. It has by no means destroyed the doctrine. The Holy Spirit stands to-day in relation to psychological thought where the notion of God stood after the Darwinian discoveries. Natural processes were then supposed to have taken the place of the supernatural, and scientific men thought that they could politely bow God out of the universe. More mature thought, however, led them to a different conclusion. For one thing the natural processes and principles that accounted for the world had themselves to be accounted for, and we now know that the doctrine of evolution has only driven us to alter our notion as to how God works, and in so doing it has enlarged and enriched our conception of the First Cause.

The psychological discoveries of our time are by

many regarded as likely to discredit the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Natural laws are explaining what was attributed to His agency ; but when it is understood that these laws have themselves to be explained, and that laws in themselves require agencies to use them and cannot be identified with these agencies, the present fear for the doctrine of the Holy Spirit will be found to be groundless. ' Suggestion,' ' Sublimation ' and the ' Unconscious ' are after all only terms to express, not merely to conceal, our ignorance as to the way in which certain psychological phenomena come about. But if these terms prove valid, then they represent only the laws of the Spirit's working—they are not substitutes for Him.

The second distinction to be drawn is between false and true evangelism. Already in the preceding pages this distinction emerged more than once, but it is so important that we may now focus our attention on it more fully, and make it as explicit as possible. Our contention is that often there passes under the name of evangelism much that is unworthy of the name, and that this can be accounted for wholly by psychological laws and processes. But there are also changes that take place in life and experiences begotten that psychology cannot explain, and for which Superhuman Agency is requisite. Since this point is, in my opinion, of great importance, we may consider what is the criterion by which we are to differentiate the false from the true in evangelism. The answer I am to give is the result of close observation.

In the first place one can judge by the *methods* employed by the evangelist. Suggestion from the

evangelist can become a powerful weapon in revivals, and some evangelists use this alone. Thus one evangelist whose methods I have studied was in the habit of making strong and extreme statements. He employed a considerable amount of humour, introduced the novel and the unexpected, created a sense of terror amongst the people by asking at the after-meeting that all doors be kept closed so that no one was allowed to leave. As for the evangelist himself, the most noticeable feature about him was a strong tendency towards exhibitionism. Thus the announcement of his arrival at the meeting had to be made before he entered, and his appearance was greeted by a cheer, while throughout the service he worked on the imagination of his congregation by an unusual display of dramatic power.

In all these methods there is nothing that cannot be called human, and self is too much in prominence to give Christ or the Holy Spirit His place. A worker in the inquiry-room of one of the missions conducted by this evangelist volunteered to give me his impression of the work done. Amongst other things, he said, he inquired of every one with whom he dealt the reason for his presence in the inquiry-room, and not one was able to give a satisfactory answer. The point illustrates how much can be accomplished by mere suggestion, and how powerful may be the influence of one mind on another. I cannot see in evangelism of this kind anything to commend it. It is fraught with the greatest dangers for those concerned and for the church. We know scores of people who, under such influences, passed through the inquiry-rooms, who are

now more hardened and more averse to religion than ever. In saying this, I do not deny that many who at first were merely influenced by suggestion became, through wise teaching, genuinely converted.

The second and perhaps better way of testing evangelism is by *its results*. Already I have pointed out that it is possible to produce changes of personality without improvement of personality. The study of multiple personality, of which so much is heard just now, furnishes sufficient illustrations of this possibility. Can anyone doubt that what happens in some revival gatherings is what the physician often induces through hypnotism? If under the influence of a revival service a man is so changed that he abandons the drink habit, and wonders why he ever indulged in such a vice, but becomes henceforth querulous, narrow, cynical, albeit a professing Christian, is he any better? Has the Kingdom of God gained by such a conversion? Is he really a Christian? These questions, I think, must be answered in the negative, and changes of this kind must not be attributed to the agency of the Holy Spirit.

In true evangelism, in which method does not usurp the place of spiritual power, in which the evangelist is so hidden that the Cross and the Holy Spirit are allowed to have their way, the new personalities that may be born will also be improved ones—moulded according to the Spirit of Jesus. I think at the moment of one man who lived an all-round vicious life. Drunkenness, gambling, immorality in its worst forms, were all indulged in. He was also evil-tempered, suspicious, greedy, and cruel. One Sunday he was

attracted to an open-air service. The message of the Cross gripped him, and he resolved to live a new life. In twenty-four hours the change in his spirit and appearance can only be described as miraculous. Everything brutal and selfish seemed suddenly to vanish; he became tender-hearted and unselfish, and his life has been ruled ever since by a strong passion to help his fellows.

This is quite an ordinary case of a genuine conversion; but there is more in it than psychology can account for. The stream cannot rise higher than its source, and if the source from which the stream of the new life takes its rise is merely the unconscious in which, according to Freud, are all manner of disgusting things, then it is impossible to understand the change; for the Christian life is not the outcome of mere sublimation in which primitive instincts are directed towards a new goal. It simply cuts across primitive instincts. The ideals of Christlike tenderness, disinterested service, and self-sacrifice which are the marks of the true Christian, are not developed from within, except through a Power that is superhuman. There is no adequate explanation of the birth of such personalities except to attribute them to the agency of the Holy Spirit, who operates through psychological laws and uses human instrumentality for the accomplishment of His purposes.

Let me in conclusion make a plea for the evangelism that produces such results. I am convinced that nothing can effectively take its place. Coe, in his *Religion of a Mature Mind*, speaks of and advocates 'salvation by education.' That there is much in

such an idea when applied to child life is undoubtedly true, but the effort to save the masses by education will be wholly ineffectual. The reason is quite obvious. It is that the source of the world's evil is to be found, not in the sphere of intellect but in that of the emotions. This is true, no matter in what form evil is expressed. In Ireland there has been in recent years an outburst of crime that has shocked the civilized world. Gunmen have been remonstrated with, but without result. Recently the spirit of revival in the North of Ireland has laid hold of many of them. It has touched and changed their emotional nature, with the result that crime has effectually been checked. Or if we take the social problem of our time—the class hatred and divisions that exist—they can all be traced to a wrong emotional attitude. Greed and selfishness are at the roots of social discontent, and these are sins of the passions. Every remedy, therefore, that appeals either to force or reason is but a mere palliation, and in the end is doomed to failure. The emotional nature must be changed; selfishness must be uprooted; then, and only then, can co-operation take the place of competition, and mutual suspicion and hatred give place to mutual confidence and love. It was the revival of the eighteenth century that saved England from the perils of revolution. True revivalism, that alters the foundations of individual character and men's conception of values, is what is supremely needed to-day.

APPENDIX

Our final contention was that evangelism to be worth while must produce not only a change of personality, but an improved personality. A brief account of some conversions that have come within my own observation may serve to show, better than abstract statements could do, the value of an evangelism that can produce such results. Some of the conversions we are about to relate took place, not in revival services, but by means of personal evangelism ; others were led to decision under the appeal of evangelistic preaching. The point I desire especially to make plain is the difference that conversion made in these cases—both in their feeling and in their behaviour.

Mr. H— belongs to a famous athletic family. His uncle was once the champion jumper in England, and he himself is a man of powerful physique and boundless energy. Unlike the majority of converts, in his testimony he seldom refers to his home life, and one is left to surmise that neither in example nor teaching does he owe much to his parents. The only religious training he received was in the Sunday School, and this could not have been of the highest order, for often he relates how, when grown to manhood, one day in a public-house he met his old Sunday-school teacher under the influence of drink, and was actually pressed to receive from his hand intoxicants. Even in his depraved state this incident brought to him a sense of disgust, and a distrust in all religion. Mr. H— was

an iron turner by trade, but he became so completely enslaved to drink that so long as his money lasted, he abandoned all thought of work. Suspensions and dismissals by his employer became frequent, he being often restored by his own pathetic pleading about his wife and children, and by his promise of reform. Finally when his own appeals were without avail, he used to send his broken-hearted wife, whose pitiable entreaties often brought to him another chance. By this time every one who knew the man despised him for his absolute lack of self-respect, his unreliableness, want of will power, and especially for his mean and cruel treatment of his wife and children.

The 'turning point' came when one day a fellow workman and an energetic Christian worker put his hand on his shoulder and said—calling him by his Christian name, 'Ned, God would make a good job of you if you would only let Him.' In the days that followed he passed through an experience of ever deepening conviction. He tells often how for the period of a week he was unable either to eat or to sleep, and that finally his whole nervous system became so completely unstrung, and his behaviour so strange, that it was feared he was suffering from some form of acute mental derangement.

At last, when the agony of soul had become unbearable, the great upheaval of his nature took place. Walking alone through a park in a state of desperation he cried to God to have mercy on him, and send peace into his troubled soul. The cry was not in vain. Suddenly, as he puts it—'Old Ned vanished and new Ned was born.' So great was the change that he

felt everything around him had somehow altered, 'the park was different, I looked at my old clothes and I could see that they were the same, and the old boots—they were two left-footed ones—they were the same, but when I looked at my hands I could not recognize them as mine, they seemed to be those of another man; all the old feelings and cravings had disappeared, and others, altogether new to me, took possession of my heart.'

This remarkable change of inner feeling and thought has manifested itself in a changed life. For straightforwardness, strength of will, gentleness of disposition, sympathy with those in need, and tenderness of heart Mr. H— is, in the judgement of the writer, unrivalled. It is enough by way of illustration to say that he could not rest if he knew of anyone in real need until he had done his best to meet it. The following simple incident is typical of his spirit. One day not far from where he lives he found a child crying, and he immediately approached her, inquiring the reason for her distress. Pointing to the broken fragments of a jug at her feet she said that her mother had sent her for milk, but she had accidentally broken the vessel and was afraid to go home. Ned's big heart went out towards her, and, taking her hand in his, he carried the broken jug from one shop to another until he found one to match it. The joy that this brought into his life, he says, was greater than anything he had experienced in his non-Christian days, and no money he had spent brought him deeper satisfaction.

. . . .

Mr. B— was brought up in a Christian home. His father died while he was quite young, but his mother did all she could to bring her children up in the fear of God. The case we are describing turned out to be 'the black sheep in the flock.' Early he allowed himself to be influenced by unhelpful companionships, and soon, instead of being led, he became the leader of a group who for sheer recklessness of life could scarcely be equalled. He early fell a victim to drunkenness, and frequented the lowest drinking haunts of the city. At his marriage he reformed. By a strong will power he was able to master his craving, and he remained ever afterwards a sober man. In many respects, however, Mr. B— sober was worse than Mr. B— drunken. When the writer got to know him all his interests were purely selfish. His hobby was pigeon flying, and all the money at his disposal went in this way. Gambling became with him a craze, and, as is the case with all gamblers, the tender feelings of his nature were soon completely destroyed. He was notable as a man of extreme hardness and dourness of nature. Though after marriage a frequent attender at worship, he never ceased to be cynical and critical where religion was concerned.

At length, under the influence of evangelistic preaching he received a revelation of himself that brought to him a deep sense of anxiety. The selfishness of his life stood out before him, and his evil career greatly distressed him. His feelings of humiliation and penitence soon became an agony, and one night in his own home for three hours he struggled for the peace of forgiveness. At last, when despair was about to

settle down upon him, he learnt that salvation comes not by effort but by trust ; and in a moment he became a new man. All the old desires vanished. The poignancy of conviction ended, and an unspeakable sense of joy became his immediate possession. He tells of how the first morning after his conversion he ran all the way to his work that, out of a glad heart, he might tell his work-mates as they gathered the great things that God had done for him—a clear proof of the inestimable value for himself of the new feelings that had come to him. Quickly the same day he disposed of his pigeons, and made up his mind that the money wasted in this way would henceforth be used in the causes of charity and religion. Not only did his selfishness disappear, but his harsh, cynical, and dour spirit as well. A tenderness of nature seldom surpassed henceforth characterized his life, and manifested itself in all sorts of ways. He himself was afterwards used in bringing many of the worst characters to Christ, and for some who were quite illiterate he formed a night school in his own home where they were taught to read and write.

Mr. S—, also a noted drunkard, was converted at a special evangelistic service. He lived with his mother and brother, both of whom were the victims of this common form of evil. He, however, was more enslaved to his vice than the others, and was fast becoming a nervous and physical wreck. His conversion led to a remarkable improvement in health. But, what was more important, it led to the development of one of the most delightful characters that it has been my privilege to know. Uneducated, he at once set himself

to the training of his mind. Eager for reading, he made his own and retained the essence of what he read, and this, lit up with illustrations from personal observation, he was able to reproduce, and apply in a fresh and most convincing manner. In addition he possessed those characteristics of humility and transparency that added greatly to the influence of his testimony. It is, perhaps, the best tribute to the nobility of his character to learn that his presence has such an influence over his work-mates that all base language is suppressed—not that he preaches religion to them, this he avoids ; but his life speaks for itself, and his character has won for him the respect and admiration of those who knew him once as a degraded drunkard, and know him now as a true Christian.

Mr. P—, a man who has reached the age of fifty, has only been converted three months. While he was standing with a crowd of working men at an open-air service, an appeal was made for instant decision. His was the only response. Boldly he stepped out, evidently under the strain of intense feeling, and, apparently unconscious of the gazing crowd, he yielded himself to the claims of Christ.

We have learned from his own lips, both in public and in private, the type of life he used to live, and what conversion has meant to him. For over forty years he indulged in the grossest forms of sin. He was so much the slave of strong drink that it was his practice for years to attempt sucking beer with the aid of straws from the barrels outside the drink shops. Frequently he was dragged to the police office in a state of helplessness, and his mother had, almost

every week, to pay fines to save him from imprisonment. His chief regret now is that he so often brought pain and anxiety to his mother's heart. Brought up in a district where there were many gambling haunts, he early fell a victim to this evil. He tells how, on the place where he was converted, he used to sit in the depth of winter gambling with cards and marbles until these were almost covered with snow. In this vice more than in drunkenness his money was wasted, and his family was reduced to a condition of abject poverty.

It is difficult for anyone who knows Mr. P— as he now is to imagine that he could ever have lived the life of indifference, self-indulgence, and recklessness at which we have only hinted. He tells of the new feelings and desires that his conversion has resulted in, of the complete disappearance of all evil tendencies, of the breaking of ingrained habits, and of the experience of a completely new set of impulses. His love for little children, his pity for those who are the slaves of vices from which he has been set free, his anxiety to have restored to him 'the years that the locust hath eaten' by henceforth making the most of his life—all prove unmistakably that a new life of singular beauty and tenderness has, through faith in Christ, come into being.

In these four cases, chosen almost at random from a group of others, the results of a true evangelism are sufficiently illustrated. Conversion has meant for each man a complete renewal of life. Emotionally, intellectually, and volitionally a most radical change has taken place.

New feelings and impulses have been born and the old ones have disappeared. Like Alphonse Ratis-bourne, of whom William James writes, each man could say, 'I looked for myself in myself and could not find myself.'

The same is true of their thoughts. New ideas about God, man, and life occupy their minds, and their conception of values—the things worth living for—is altogether different from what it used to be. Reality no longer inheres in things material. The spiritual is supreme and all important.

There is a parallel change of will. Each man of those we have been referring to has told us of his repeated attempts to reform, and of his inability to do so. His habits and passions had control of him, but his conversion has brought to him such a reinforcement of will power that resistance is easy where before it was impossible. Every man who experiences conversion marvels at the new power of will that he receives, and the striking result of the conversions we have described—and all genuine conversions—is the way in which the hard, callous, selfish and cruel tendencies have given place to a tenderness, simplicity and graciousness of spirit. The prophetic word has been in their case fulfilled, 'I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you an heart of flesh.' Psycho-analysts tell us that 'there can be no new foundation without a *regressive* formation¹; by which is meant that the only way in which the neurotic sufferer can achieve mental health is by

¹ Pfister, *Some Applications of Psycho-Analysis*, p. 340.

going back to the attitudes and feelings of childhood, recalling the emotional experiences of early days, and then by adopting towards them a new attitude, to build up life afresh. This, in the region of character, is what Jesus meant when He said—‘Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.’ Men who have grown hard, and debased in character—men suffering from moral ailments—must, in order to a renewal of life, go back to their early attitudes. The tenderness of childhood, lost throughout the years, they must again experience, and then a new character must be built up—one in which the spirit of sympathy, charity, and unselfishness must rule. Conversion really means for those who have missed their way morally and spiritually beginning life afresh—getting another chance. What more glorious work can be conceived of than this—to rejuvenate and refashion the lives that have grown old in sin?



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